
World Bank approves \$24 million loan to Sri Lanka

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Washington (PTI): The World Bank on Wednesday approved a \$ 24 million IDA credit to Sri Lanka to help it provide health service delivery programme, with particular emphasis on the special health needs in north and east arising out of the recent conflict. Twelve million dollars will go to the Northern and Eastern Provinces to help the Sri Lankan Government meet their special health needs arising from the conflict in the region.

About 280,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) currently reside in temporary camps. "This reflects the Bank's commitment to addressing consequences of the conflict whenever we can," said Naoko Ishii, World Bank Country Director for Sri Lanka. "An upcoming health needs assessment for the north and east will determine the specific activities the project will finance, but it could include mobile clinics at IDP camps, rehabilitation of disabled, treatment of traumatized persons, and other immediate priorities," Ishii said. The \$ 24 million is additional financing to Health Sector Development Project, currently financed by an IDA grant of \$ 60 million which was approved by the Bank on June 15, 2004. The project will continue to support decentralization of health service delivery, including strengthening of district and provincial capacity for planning and implementation of health programs, the Bank said in a statement. It will also support efforts to improve service delivery and renovate health facilities, provide training for health workers, and provision of medical supplies and equipment, it said. "The project has been helping the Provincial and District level authorities in taking greater responsibility for the primary and secondary level health care," said Sundararajan Srinivasa Gopalan, World Bank team leader for the project. "This results in programs that are more responsive to the needs of local communities," he said. Courtesy: hindu.com